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PART III

'N-DEPEN OO-L-MAASAE MASAI PROVERBS AND SAYINGS

* 539 No. 1. Ainyt-pe laganisio since
What-and (or Why) you-are-rich like

en-naiyamiehe ci-tito !
the-who-has-married (intr.) the-son !

Why do you behave like a woman whose son has just married !

[571] [A newly married man usually lives in his father's house for some
[606] months after his marriage, and a woman whose son has recently married
may sit down and rest, as her daughter-in-law will do all the work.]

No. 2. Eata en-chor.
He-has the-which-divide

There is a Judge for him, and He will avenge me.

[A favourite saying when a person has been defeated in a fight.]

No. 3. Eata 7-ajidga 'o-giyaa.
They-have the-flies the-cars.)

Flies have cars.

Also: Eata en-gwaria 'o-giyaa.
It-has the-night the-cars.

The night has cars.

[' Walls have cars.]

No. 4. Elatiki en-gutak nainoo 'enya
It-reaches (or Perhaps) the-mouth which-ate the-fat

nainoo i-igik, naitiki
and-it-ate the-excrements, and-it-reaches (or and-perhaps)

en-nainoo 7igik nainoo i-enya.
the-which-ate the-excrements and-it-ate the-fat.

The mouth which ate fat shall eat excrement, and that which ate excrement shall eat fat.

Also: Elatiki ci-chaara 'o-gitafget neaku
It reaches } the-who-killed the-cutters and-he-becomes
(or Perhaps) } (or attackers or enemies))

and other matters associated therewith.

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prison is being made and when honey wine is being brewed. During the time that a man is making prison (eight days) he is treated almost as an outcast. He must leave his house at 4 a.m. and not return till 7 p.m., when he must rub clay on his body. He may not eat when the sun is above the horizon; he may only relieve nature far away from the kraal; and he must sleep alone. If he were to break any of these rules it is believed that the prison would be useless. When honey wine is to be brewed a man and a woman are selected for the purpose, neither of whom has had sexual intercourse for two days. A hut is set apart for them to live in until the honey wine is ready for drinking (six days), during which time they may not sleep together. As soon as the honey wine is ready they receive payment, and go to their respective homes. Were they to have sexual intercourse during the six days that the honey wine is brewing, it is believed that the wine would be undrinkable, and the bees that made the honey would fly away.

Mothers-in-law and their sons-in-law (*ng-opuani*) must avoid one another as much as possible, and if a son-in-law enters his mother-in-law's hut she must retire into the inner compartment and sit on the bed, whilst he remains in the outer compartment; they may then talk. Own brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law (*o-sindani* *h-nyul* and *o-sindani* *o-nyul*) must also avoid one another, though this rule does not apply to half-brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law (*o-sindani* and *o-sindani*). This rule is possibly due to the fact that when a man dies his own brother may not marry his widow, though there is no objection to his half-brother (paternal) or one of his paternal cousins taking her to wife. In fact, the only person who may marry a widow is one of the deceased husband's half-brothers or paternal cousins. It frequently happens, however, that widows never re-marry, but live with their children in the kraal of the eldest living brother of their late husband, who becomes the guardian of their children.

Divorce is almost unknown amongst the Masai, and it is only barren women who may be divorced. But if a woman is barren it is usual for her husband to give her some of his children by another wife to bring up. Daughters are usually selected; but if there are several sons the youngest and the youngest but two may be given to the stepmother. When a barren woman is a bad woman and is disliked by her husband and his other wives, she may be divorced, in which case her father or his heirs must refund the cattle paid for her, and she is at liberty to re-marry.

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	Number of cattle.	Cattle per Gate.		Percentage.	
		Gates.			
	Under 50	—	52	—	10.1%
	50 — 100	—	92	—	17.9%
	101 — 200	—	193	—	37.5%
	201 — 300	—	115	—	22.4%
	301 — 400	—	34	—	6.5%
	401 — 500	—	11	—	2.1%
	501 — 600	—	9	—	1.7%
	601 — 700	—	3	—	15%
	701 — 800	—	2		
	801 — 900	—	1		
	901 — 1000	—	1		
	Over 1000	—	1		
		Total 514			

As 156,966 cattle were owned by these 514 gates it follows that the average number per gate is just over three hundred, but this figure is misleading, for two-thirds of the gates possess less than two hundred head.*

The advantages of marriage not only include the acquisition of a woman to bear one's children and to tend one's cattle. For marriage sets up a new relationship with one's wife's family, whereby each party is expected to help the other. If a father-in-law loses his cattle by drought or disease, the son-in-law is expected to contribute towards a new herd; if a son-in-law strikes hard times, the father-in-law — if only for the sake of his daughter — will transfer cattle to him.

At times, also, a daughter will, by amicable arrangement with the son-in-law, return to live with her father for considerable periods, being visited from time to time by her husband, or again a grandson will be sent from home to help herd his grandfather's cattle.

The fulfilment of these various obligations leads to much travelling and consequent contact, almost as much as the actual betrothal and marriage does. This latter is a lengthy process. Early betrothal is the rule and involves a long engagement, during which the man is expected to maintain contact with his future in-laws. Frequent travelling is also necessary in other connections; for example a man goes himself or sends a son to examine the water and pasture of the area to which he proposes to move, and as we have seen the moran are always on the move, visiting friends, begging bullocks for meat-feasts, etc. So in spite of the size of the area which they inhabit, and of their scattered settlements, the Masai maintain very close contact amongst themselves.

Another point of considerable importance in Masai family affairs is the adoption of children, frequently practised both in respect of Masai

* The mean number of cattle per gate lies between 100 and 200 or between 25 and 50 head per adult male taxpayer—Ed.

In the first descending generation, the word *en-kerni*, "child," may be applied to son, daughter, brother's son and daughter, and father's brother's son's son and daughter, or they may be distinguished as masc. *ol-ayioni*, "boy," and fem. *en-tito*, "girl." Father's brother's daughter's son is *ol-aputani*, and father's brother's daughter's daughter *en-e-sotua*, the latter term applying also to father's sister's daughter's daughter, and mother's sister's son's daughter. The term *o-le-sotua* is applied to the mother's brother's daughter's son, mother's sister's son's son, mother's sister's daughter's son, and father's sister's daughter's son. *O-le-nk-apu* is applied to the sons of father's sister's son and mother's brother's son, and *en-e-nk-apu* to their daughters. In this generation there are no terms for mother's brother's daughter's daughter, and mother's sister's daughter's daughter. 601

In the second descending generation, *ol-akui* includes the sons of a man's own son and daughter, brother's son, father's brother's son's son, father's brother's son's daughter; while *enk-akui* is applied to their daughters. Father's brother's daughter's son's son is *ol-aputani*, and the daughter is *en-e-sotua*. The term *o-le-nk-apu* covers son's son, and the sons of sister's son, father's sister's son's son, and mother's brother's son's son; their daughters are *en-e-nk-apu*. *O-le-sotua* includes the sons of sister's daughter, father's brother's daughter's daughter, father's sister's daughter's son, father's sister's son's daughter, mother's brother's son's daughter, mother's brother's daughter's son, mother's sister's son's son, mother's sister's son's daughter, and mother's sister's daughter's son; *en-e-nk-apu* is applied to the daughters. There are no terms for mother's brother's daughter's daughter's son and daughter, or for mother's sister's daughter's daughter's son and daughter.

Among affines, the term *ol-aputani* is applied to wife's father, wife's father's brother, and wife's brother, but their wives are *enk-aputani*, *en-e-sotua*, and *en-e-sotua* respectively. Son and grandson of wife's brother are also *ol-aputani*. Wife's sister is *e-sindani* *e-anyit*, and all children and grandchildren of wife's brother and sister (except wife's brother's son and grandson) are *e-sotua*. The majority of affinal terms are in fact of the *e-sotua* category. Husband is *ol-morno* or *ol-payian*, wife *e-goroyioni* or *en-kitok*; junior wife is *enk-aini*.

These kinship terms, however, are not very much used, for it is the custom of the Masai to call each other by cattle-names: members of a domestic group give each other cattle on various occasions, and thereafter the word denoting the kind of animal given is used as the equivalent of a reciprocal relative term; the animal name is prefixed by *pa*, meaning "giver or receiver of." Thus, a father usually gives his son a bull when he is about 10 years old, and they then call each other *pa-oigoni*, "giver (receiver) of a bull" instead of *papa* and *li-ayioni*. An elder brother will give a younger brother a heifer, and they will then be *pa-n-lawuo* (heifer) to each other. Paternal cousins often call each other *pa-meregesh* (ram). 551

Among these relatives, the mother's brother has great power and influence over his sister's son. He can give him orders, which must be obeyed, and he may take what he wants from his nephew, who has also the right to take what he wants from his uncle. Refusal to obey the mother's brother can be punished by cursing, but this is not reciprocal. Behaviour patterns are based on seniority and the claims of kinship, and are expressed in the avoidance of bad language and unseemly actions, and the observance of formality between certain persons. There is avoidance between a man and his wife's mother, and between a man and his full brother's wife, though not between him and his half-brother's wife. The formality of greetings helps to preserve the respect for elderhood. 604 602 606 607 888

Pre-marital Sex-life

A man's sex-life begins when he has been circumcised; a girl's when she reaches puberty. Pre-marital relations are more formalized than among the Nandi, since the unmarried warriors of a local company, *sirit*, live in a barrack, *e-manyata*, with their mothers, some of their sisters, and their girl lovers, *e-sanca*, each man having his own lover. The rules which regulate marriage apply in the selection of a lover. 836

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583 not alone, however, but with the support of a friend. The honey pot is hung on a horizontal pole, one of them grasping each end. It is not the weight of the pot that makes this method of carrying necessary, but an ancient custom, about whose meaning I have discovered

[556] nothing. Wealthy people often also pay up to four cows more than usual, which is then regarded as the highest price that may be demanded. Beauties, as well as daughters of distinguished people, that is, of wealthy and influential people, often stand above the

[587] average price. The price for childless widows and for childless, divorced women is the same as for young girls. for a widow who bore daughters, on the other hand, only a male and a female head of cattle are paid. In order that her father does not receive bride price twice, however, he gives back from the first one as much as the second one amounts to. For the second, third, etc. wife, just as much is paid as for the first. If the bride price is in part deferred for the bridegroom, the woman nevertheless passes into his possession provisionally, and likewise the children born before the final settlement of the bride price belong to him. If, however, he then absolutely refuses to pay the rest, the father-in-law or the mother-in-law has the right to take back the daughter with her children in exchange for the return of what has already been paid. The cattle paid as bride price must be plain black or white. With the payment

• [606] of the bride price, the bride withdraws from her family. In /46/ some lineages, however, there still prevails a -- so it seems -- formerly general custom, according to which the father-in-law does not lose the right to interfere in the domestic relations of the young couple until the son-in-law has further given him a bull. The relatives of the bridegroom need not contribute the payment of the bride price, but usually do it if it is necessary. The bride does not get a dowry, just as the bridegroom does not receive a gift from his parents or parents-in-law. If one of the betrothed dies before the marriage or dissolves the betrothal, the portion of the bride price that was paid is returned. If the husband turns the wife out or the marriage remains fruitless, this has no influence on the bride price paid, while a possible remainder not yet paid remains unpaid. On the other hand, if a childless woman leaves her husband, the

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